

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

January 23, 2015

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource

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CBC

<http://www.cbc.ca/calgary/learning-english/>

News story #1 Drinking and Doing Drugs on the Job?

Why do people drink alcohol and use drugs? What do you think about people drinking alcohol and using illegal drugs while they are at work? This first story is about city councilors who have been accused of taking drugs and drinking while working at city hall.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences.

Answers are in the appendix.

Word	Definition
allegations/ accusations	Statements made that someone has done something wrong, or illegal, but it hasn't been proven
booze	Alcohol
illegal	Not legal; not allowed by law
elected officials	People who have won most of the votes in an election to become a person who works in the government
tighten	To make a rule or law more strict or less relaxed
drunk	Unable to control your speech or behavior because of drinking too much alcohol

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

committee meeting – when people in charge of making the rules for a certain group meet together

ethical conduct policy – a set of rules that say how people should behave

1. It looks like the airports are going to have to _____ their security soon because people keep getting onto airplanes with dangerous goods. It is _____ to bring dangerous goods like certain weapons and chemicals from one country to another, but people do it anyways.
2. There have been many unfair _____ in relation to terrorism made against innocent Muslim people, because they are of the same religious group as many terrorist groups worldwide.
3. Drinking _____ while at work and getting _____ is only going to lead to trouble.
4. _____ are being accused of drinking alcohol while at work.

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. _____ There are accusations that councillors are doing drugs and drinking at work.
2. _____ After a committee meeting about drinking and doing drugs at work, the allegations started.
3. _____ The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how to tighten the rules on booze.
4. _____ Calgary's mayor had no idea that there were councilors drinking at city hall before the meeting.
5. _____ As of right now, elected officials don't need to follow the same rules as city employees.
6. _____ The goal of the committee meeting is to get councilors to slow down the drinking and drug use.

Discussion: What should happen to people who get caught drinking at work? Why?

News story #2 Road Rage, or Racism?

Why are innocent Muslim people being singled out and abused by random people? This second story is about how Muslims have been treated as a result of what happened at Charlie Hebdo in France.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Match the words in the story with the synonyms.

Answers are in the appendix.

Answer	Words in the story	Synonyms (Related words)
	unsettling	a) mass killing; bloodbath
	harass	b) occurrence; event
	massacre	c) disturbing; alarming
	incident	d) protestor; fanatic for a cause
	confusion	e) to say aloud; declare; assert
	activist	f) bother; hassle; intimidate
	speak out	g) chaos; complication

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

road rage – when people get extremely angry and act out in a violent or destructive manner because of the actions of another driver on the road

racial slurs – to say something rude that is against another race of people

racially motivated – to do something because of reasons related to someone's race

hijab – a traditional scarf worn by Muslim women to cover their hair and sometimes the face too

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Chronological order

Order the following events in the order they happened, not in the order you hear them.

Answers are in the appendix.

1. Hiba stops at a four-way stop sign.
2. A man punches Hiba's mirror and window of her vehicle.
3. Hiba leaves her home to drive her son to school.
4. Saima Jamal asks the Mayor to speak out on behalf of Muslim women.
5. Police declare the incident to be a case of road rage.
6. A man yells racial slurs at Hiba.
7. Hiba reports the incident to the police.

Discussion Questions: How could what happened at Charlie Hebdo in France connect to the incident in this story? What would you do or say if you heard someone making racial slurs about another group of people? How can you help spread positivity and understanding to the people around you?

News story #3 Blue Monday

Do you find yourself feeling sad lately? Do you think the season, or time of year, can affect how you feel? This next story is about the Blue Monday, the day of the year that most people feel stressed or sad.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Match the words with the correct definitions.

Answers are in the appendix.

Answer	Words or phrases	Definition
	holidays	a) expenses that people have to pay such as credit card, power, water, electricity, mortgage etc.
	bills	b) to not get enough sleep at night
	stressed	c) to start something off; to initiate something
	lack of sleep	d) a period of time when people do not have to work and they can celebrate and be with family
	launch	e) cheerful or confident emotional or mental state
	positive	f) to feel like the things we have to do in life are too much to handle
	morale	g) good or nice

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

financial problems - problems or issues that are related to money

ATB Financial survey – a questionnaire to learn about people's feelings, opinions and facts about their lives given to a wide variety of people from ATB Financial (a bank)

SAIT – Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (a technical, skill based post-secondary school)

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Answer the questions below as you listen to the audio. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. What are three reasons that people might be feeling sad (or blue)?
2. What day of the year is Blue Monday on?
3. How do half of the people in Alberta feel on Blue Monday?
4. What place is trying to improve morale during January?
5. What is this place doing to help people feel better? (Be specific)
6. How can people get involved with the 28 Days of Happiness?

Discussion: What kinds of things can you do to keep a positive attitude in the middle of winter, or any other time you're feeling sad or down? Make a list of positive comments you could make to people if you were the person writing the comments for The 28 days of Happiness e-mails.

Language Focus: Parts of Speech

Parts of speech are the different word classes that we use in English. Some words can take on different meanings, or word classes, by changing the ending of the word. Today's lesson will show you the difference between 4 common parts of speech in English.

1. A noun represents the person, or people, the place/s or thing/s.

Common endings – gets a plural -s, e.g. teachers; -sion, -tion, -ment, -er, -or and there is often an article (a, an, the) before the singular noun.

E.g. The young, handsome **teacher** enthusiastically teaches his **students**.

2. An adjective describes the noun; giving more information about the person, place or thing.

Common endings - er, -est, -ive. -ed, -al

E.g. The **young, handsome** teacher enthusiastically teaches his students.

3. A verb represents the action of the noun; telling what the noun is doing.

Common endings -ed (regular past tense); -s, -es (present tense he/she/it); or irregular.

E.g. The young, handsome teacher **teaches** his students.

4. An adverb describes how the verb is done, giving more information about the action.

Common ending -ly

E.g. The young, handsome teacher **enthusiastically** teaches his students.

Here are some words taken from the stories. Try to find the other parts of speech that these words can become by changing their endings. Use a dictionary, if you are unsure. The spaces with the ---- do not have a part of speech in that form. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
e.g. Education	Educate	Educated; educational	Educationally
	Council	-----	-----
Allegation		-----	
	Accuse	-----	
		Harassed	-----
Motive			-----
Activist			
		Certain	
	-----	Racist	-----
Stress			-----
			Financially
-----	Tighten		

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	JANUARY 23 RD WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, this is Rosa Marchitelli. You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of January 23 rd .	0:00
Story 1	Allegations at city hall that councillors have been drunk and even used drugs while on the job. The accusations came up during a city council committee meeting that was discussing adding more rules on booze. Calgary's mayor says he hasn't seen it but he has heard of councillors drinking alcohol and using illegal drugs at city hall. Naheed Nenshi says that's why council needs to tighten the rules about the use of alcohol by councillors. A city committee is looking at amending its ethical conduct policy, so elected officials have to follow the same rules as city employees -- no alcohol at work.	0:08
Story 2	There are unsettling reports about Muslim women in Calgary being harassed since the massacre at Charlie Hebdo in France. Hiba only wants her first name used after an incident that occurred as she was driving her son to school. She says confusion at a 4-way stop prompted a man to pull up beside her and begin yelling racial slurs while punching the mirror and window of her vehicle. Police dismissed the incident as road rage, but Hiba wears a hijab and she is certain the attack was racially motivated. She says Muslim women need to be careful. Local Muslim activist Saima Jamal says she has documented several similar incidents since the massacre in France. She says police need to take reports like Hiba's seriously and she is urging the Mayor to speak out on behalf of Muslim women.	0:55
Story 3	The Holidays are over. The bills are coming in, and the weather is a bit grey. January 19th has been called Blue Monday. According to an ATB Financial survey, half of Albertans are feeling stressed that day. For many, the problem is a lack of sleep. For others, it's financial problems. SAIT is taking steps to improve morale during January. It's launched the 28 Days of Happiness. Students who sign up on-line will get an e-mail each day with a positive message or activity.	2:00

Answer key

News story 1

Vocabulary:

1. It looks like the airports are going to have to tighten their security soon because people keep getting onto airplanes with dangerous goods. It is illegal to bring dangerous goods like certain weapons and chemicals from one country to another, but people do it anyways.
2. There have been many unfair allegations/accusations in relation to terrorism made against innocent Muslim people because they are of the same religious group as many terrorist groups worldwide.
3. Drinking booze while at work and getting drunk is only going to lead to trouble.
4. Elected officials are being accused of drinking alcohol while at work.

Listening:

1. T There are accusations that councillors are doing drugs and drinking at work.
2. F After a committee meeting about drinking and doing drugs at work the allegations started.
3. T The purpose of the meeting was to discuss how to tighten the rules on booze.
4. F Calgary's mayor had no idea that there were councilors drinking at city hall before the meeting.
5. T As of right now, elected officials don't need to follow the same rules as city employees.
6. F The goal of the committee meeting is to get councilors to slow down the drinking and drug use.

News story 2

Vocabulary:

Answer	Words in the story	Synonyms (Related words)
c	unsettling	a) mass killing; bloodbath
f	harass	b) occurrence; event
a	massacre	c) disturbing; alarming
b	incident	d) protestor; fanatic for a cause
g	confusion	e) to say aloud; declare; assert
d	activist	f) bother; hassle; intimidate
e	speak out	g) chaos; complication

Listening:

1. 2 Hiba stops at a four-way stop sign.
2. 3 A man punches Hiba's mirror and window of her vehicle.
3. 1 Hiba leaves her home to drive her son to school.
4. 6 Saima Jamal asks the Mayor to speak out on behalf of Muslim women.

5. 5 Police declare the incident to be a case of road rage.
6. 3 A man yells racial slurs at Hiba
7. 4 Hiba reports the incident to the police.

News story 3

Vocabulary:

Answer	Words or phrases	Definition
d	holidays	a) expenses that people have to pay such as credit card, power, water, electricity, mortgage etc.
a	bills	b) to not get enough sleep at night
f	stressed	c) to start something off; to initiate something
b	lack of sleep	d) a period of time when people do not have to work and they can celebrate and be with family
c	launched	e) cheerful or confident emotional or mental state
g	positive	f) to feel like the things we have to do in life are too much to handle
e	morale	g) good or nice

Listening:

1. What are three reasons that people might be feeling sad (or blue)? **Because the holidays are over, the bills are coming in and the weather is grey and not sunny.**
2. What day of the year is Blue Monday on? **Monday, January 19th**
3. How do half of the people in Alberta feel on Blue Monday? **Stressed**
4. What place is trying to improve morale during January? **SAIT**
5. What is this place doing to help people feel better? (Be specific) **It is launching an e-mail campaign called The 28 Days of Happiness, which will send people a positive message or activity people can do each day.**
6. How can people get involved with the 28 Days of Happiness? **By signing up online**

Language focus:

Noun	Verb	Adjective	Adverb
e.g. Education	Educate	Educated; educational	Educationally
Councilor	Council	-----	-----
Allegation	Allege	-----	Allegedly
Accusation	Accuse	-----	Accusingly

Harassment; harasser	Harass	Harassed	-----
Motive	Motivate	Motivated	-----
Activist	Act	Active	Actively
Certainty	Ascertain	Certain	Certainly
Racism; race	-----	Racist	-----
Stress	Stress	Stressed	-----
Finance	Finance	Financial	Financially
-----	Tighten	Tight	Tightly